

# VALLEY FREE PRESS

GAY & LESBIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

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## ALLENTOWN CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER CIVIL RIGHTS

The Human Relations Commission, spurred by Vice Chair Robert R. Smith Jr. (who, during his past unsuccessful campaign for City Council said, "I will fight for equal rights for homosexuals whether I win this election or not"), and Chair Felix Molina asked City Councilman Frank Concannon to introduce the addition of sexual orientation (actual or assumed) to the current anti discrimination ordinance.

The current ordinance protects people from unfair discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation based on race, color, religion, family status (in housing only), age, marital status, sex, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, handicap, or use of a guide dog. It does not protect gay men, lesbians, bisexuals or anyone perceived to be so. There are no Federal or Pennsylvania State laws which grant gay men and lesbians civil rights either. In other words, someone can be fired for being gay and it's legal.

Smith, Molina and Councilman Concannon hustled to lobby Council for a co-sponsor. A co-sponsor is required to introduce any legislation. Although City Council members received a positive response to this legislation, several, who are running in this election for state representative, decided to put off this (what they believe to be) hot potato issue fearing controversy during their pre-primary campaign. PA-GALA (Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action) representative Liz Bradbury has been told that a City Council member will reconsider co-sponsorship after the May 19th primary election.

In order to pass a piece of legislation there must be four city council votes and approval of the Mayor. The Lehigh Valley branch of PA-GALA is urging all Allentown residents to write letters and/or call members of City Council and politely urge them to co-sponsor this addition of sexual orientation to the anti-discrimination ordinance.

When this legislation is introduced, Council will assign it to committee for public debate, then it will go back to full Council for further debate and vote. At both times PA-GALA members and others from the community, will present facts about anti-gay employment and housing in Allentown, including statistics from the 1995 Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force local survey. It will be a good time for community member to show support of this legislation by attending the meetings at City Hall. Those in the community who have lost their jobs, been harassed at work, or denied housing or public services, because of anti-gay discrimination, should contact PA-GALA at 432-5449. All you need to do is tell the PA-GALA member your story, so that if a council member suggests there is no discrimination in Allentown against gay people, the PA-GALA member can relate your story. Your name, and the employer will remain confidential unless you wish to tell the story yourself.

If you want to help call PA-GALA.

## PRIDE FEST DATE SET

Pride of the Lehigh Valley has scheduled the Fifth Annual Pride Festival for Sunday, June 21st., in Allentown's Cedar Beach Park. The Festival, which was attended last year by a reported six thousand people, will have continuous on stage entertainment, and a huge variety of booths representing all areas of the gay and lesbian community.

Sunday's festival will be the crowning star of a week long series of events including a benefit presentation by the Enigma Players at the Theater Outlet on Monday night, a PA-GALA event on Tuesday, and the Pride Gay and Lesbian Film Festival on Wednesday.

Volunteers are needed. Call the Pride Hot Line at 770-6200.

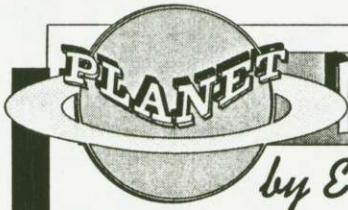
## GAY MEN'S CHORUS TO PRESENT "PRAYERS FOR BOBBY"

The award winning Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus will be performing their Spring Concert entitled, "Side By Side" at the Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem, on May 16th, beginning at 8 pm. In the first half of the concert, the New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus will be joining the LVGMC in a collection of popular tunes.

The second half will present "Prayers for Bobby", a musical version of a book which tells the story of a mother coming to terms with the suicide of her gay son and her role in his life and death in relation to her religious opposition of his orientation. This production includes both choruses and a ten piece orchestra. The part of Bobby will be sung by tenor Buddy Symes of the Silicon Valley Gay Men's Chorus of San Jose California. Symes performed the part of Bobby on the album recording. The part of the mother will be sung by Beverly Morgan, musical director of Lehigh Valley's ACCO A Chorus Celebrating Women. Narration of the story will be read by Ardath Rodale who has been honored by F.A.C.T. for her support and participation in the fight against AIDS. The music was arranged and will be directed by J. A. Kawarsky, director of the New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus.

Tickets are \$10 and will be available at the door or can be ordered by calling LVGMC at 366-3320. The concert is a benefit for three local organizations: AIDS Services of Bethlehem, P-FLAG (Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians and Gays) of the Lehigh Valley, and Pride of the Lehigh Valley, the organizers of the Gay and Lesbian Pride Festival. The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus is celebrating its 5 year anniversary. Non-singing members, as well as singing members, are also encouraged to volunteer to help with all aspects of the Chorus' production. Call 366-3320 for more information.

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**PLANET**

# Parenthood

by Emily Dugan

## IN PURSUIT OF LESBIAN MOTHERHOOD

I always knew I wanted to be a mother. When I figured out I was a lesbian at age 18, I knew motherhood was not going to happen by accident. This was going to require some creativity.

I still thought the first step should be getting "married" because I thought the adults in the house should out-number the children, at least at first. Finding the woman of my dreams involved a few false starts; I will spare you the details.

Trying to be a rational romantic, I developed a list of criteria for my perfect life partner. Then I fell wildly in love with Chris. It was that can't sleep, can't eat, can't function, euphoric kind of in love. But in the midst of the starry-eyed lust I interviewed her like a job applicant. "What are your views on life partnership and monogamy?" "Do you want children?" "Are you a good money manager?"

Luckily she turned out to be extremely tolerant and finds amusement in what could otherwise be really annoying. The other good thing about her is a kind of slow but steady approach which balances my tendency to rush things. Six months later I was ready to live together and for one of us to get pregnant. She said "What, are you nuts? I haven't known you long enough!"

A few years later I got the "go ahead". Our first interest was in adoption. Neither one of us had a particularly romantic view of pregnancy. A little research revealed that adoption is incredibly expensive. My health insurance made insemination and pregnancy almost free. Clearly it was cheaper to make your own.

And so we began to shop for sperm by mail order. For practical reasons I had to have it delivered to my place of work. This made for some interesting conversations. It arrived in something that looked like a small space ship. I brought it home and tried to tuck it discreetly in a corner. Chris walked through the front door and said "Oh, my God, there's sperm in my living room!!"

We tried this a few times without success. Apparently frozen sperm is not that great compared to the fresh stuff. Anyone who's been through this knows that this is not a good time. I began to have

this cycle of excitement-anxiety-depression that made me rather difficult to live with. Then we went to an infertility specialist who started me on drugs so now in addition I was hormonally deranged. And to make matters worse some of these drugs involved very large long needles in my butt cheeks. In fairly short order, we decided to get "OK" about spending the money on adoption.

Tune in to the next addition of The Valley Free Press for part two of Planet Parenthood.

Please send in your own stories of the joys and trials of gay and lesbian parenthood, or the pursuit thereof. There is both richness and humor in the day to day, and I for one would love to hear it all. (You can use a pseudonym to preserve your privacy.)

## P-FLAG NEWS

The new book "From Wounded Hearts", edited by Roberta Kreider is being offered for sale at the pre-publication price by local P-FLAG (Parents Friends and Family of Lesbians and Gays) members. Subtitled "Faith Stories of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons", the book contains about fifty personal stories about experiences with organized religion and religious faith. To order this book call Roberta Kreider at 215-257-7322.

Local P-Flag members have been asked for help in starting a new chapter in Reading. People interested in participating in its formation should call Helen Early at 215-368-2473.

Lehigh Valley P-Flag meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at Cedar Crest college in Tompkins Center in the "1876" room at 3pm. Call 967-5219 for more information. The next meeting will be on May 10th. It just might be the prefect Mother's Day event to share with your Mom.

## AIDS OUTREACH BENEFIT PARTY

AIDS Outreach volunteers are tossing a "Glitter Ball" on Saturday, May 2nd from 8 pm til 1 am at Castle Hill Lounge, 1529 Broadway, in Bethlehem. The 70's style disco dance is a non-alcohol event open to everyone 18 years old or over. The \$20 cover charge includes food, beverages, and music spun by D.J. Mike Smith. There will be a silent auction and door prizes. Proceeds benefit AIDS Outreach a not for profit service organization in Allentown. Call 435-8424 for more information.

## A VIEW FROM A DYKE

### BY LIZ BRADBURY

How to be a SUPER HERO in less than 40 minutes a year

I loved it when "Ellen" told her old boyfriend that he didn't make her gay, "unless you played catwoman on the old batman show" (Julie Newmar or Eartha Kitt , who's your pick?). They were super-villians not super heroes. What the heck, it's an accomplishment to be SUPER anything.

That's what Trish and I felt last election time when we found out we were SUPER VOTERS. SUPER VOTERS are people who vote in every election. I didn't use to do that. I always found it hard to vote in off year elections when I didn't know who the candidates were. And then, when I found out that there were stealth Christian Coalition candidates sneaking onto school board democratic tickets I was really afraid to vote.

In the last few years however, I've had really good information about the candidates from the PA-GALA Voter's Booklets. So Trish and I always vote. If we can't get good information about a candidate or two, we skip them, but we still vote in every primary and every election. That's what makes us SUPER VOTERS.

Candidates go to the Voter's Registration Office and pick up lists of who's registered and when they voted last and how many times they've voted in the last ten years and in what party they are registered. They can't tell who you voted for, but they can tell if, when, and how much. So if you're registered and vote in every election, politicians know and you get a prize! The prize is that they care what you think. They'll call you and listen to your concerns in exchange for asking you to vote for them. They'll come to your door and ask you to vote for them and they chat with you like you're their neighborhood pal.

Imagine that they rate you on a 1 to 10 scale. You wrote a letter to them, you're a one. Then they check address to see if you are a resident of their district. Now you're rated a 3. They see if you're registered to vote, now you're a 5. Do you actually vote? If yes, you're a 7. You vote every election and primary? (Remember there's a primary and

general election every year.) You're a 10! Your SUPER VOTER opinion means more, or at least your attitude about voting for them, mean more. Sounds like I'm cynical, no just realistic.

I know this is true, remember I'M A SUPER VOTER, I'm a 10. Last election, the Mayor's campaign called me and Trish six times. They sent us tons of stuff. Each person running for city council either came to our door, or called, or someone from their campaign came. The more organized and sophisticated ( and the more likely to be successful) the more likely they were to contact us (SUPER VOTERS) in person.

Every time they called or came by, Trish and I got a chance to harangue them on how we felt about gay and lesbian and other issues and find out whether they would support our rights. They remember this stuff, they write it down. It matters to them because they want our votes. If you send them a letter and they look you up and see you aren't even registered to be able to vote against them, then why should they worry about your opinion? Believe me they don't.

PA-GALA has a list of registered voters so we can send people on our mailing list voter registration forms. You'd be surprised at who hasn't voted for years. Years! Like since Clinton ran the first time. (You know who you are!) Prominent leaders in the Gay Community! Hey, you think it doesn't matter? Look, if every gay man and lesbian in Allentown had voted for Robert Smith for City Council, he'd be the co-sponsor with Concannon on this legislation and we'd have the same rights as everyone else by the end of this month.

If you didn't vote last November, wise up and vote. Even if you hate all the candidates go and write your own name in the write-in slot. At least you'll be on your way to SUPER VOTER status!

If every gay man and lesbian in the Lehigh Valley was registered and a SUPER VOTER, we'd already have employment and housing rights. We could rock this place. It's not like you don't know who to vote for. We are one of the only gay communities in the country that has a booklet for every election (PA-GALA Gay and Lesbian VOTE) which tells you about all the candidates. So register now. Don't be a schmo, be a SUPER HERO!

# POP QUIZ

1. Who wrote "Serving in Silence"?  
A. Transsexual tennis coach Rene Richards  
B. NY Times food editor Craig Claiborne  
C. Army Colonel Margarethe Cammermeyer  
D. Tennis Great Martina Navratilova
  
2. Who Wrote "Howl"?  
A. Beat Generation Poet Alan Ginsberg  
B. "The Hunger" actor Susan Sarandon  
C. Singer / actor Madonna  
D. "Rocky Horror" actor Tim Curry
  
3. Who came out of the Tunnel of Love sitting on Nature Boy's lap saying, "Oh Nature, I didn't know you cared!" ?  
A. Wally Cox B. Beavis  
C. Bugs Bunny D. Stan Laurel
  
4. Who was honored by the very first star in the Hollywood Walk of Fame?  
A. Betty Davis B. Joanne Woodward  
C. Talulah Bankhead D. Montgomery Cliff
  
5. The Frederick's of Hollywood store nearest to the Lehigh Valley is in:  
A. Lehigh Valley Mall  
B. The new Main St.. Commons in Bethlehem  
C. King of Prussia Plaza  
D. Nanuet Mall
  
6. Giovanni's Room bookstore gets it's name from:  
A. A play by lesbian expatriate Natalie Barney.  
B. A novel by French writer Andre Gide.  
C. A surrealist movie by Jean Cocteau.  
D. An essay by African American writer James Baldwin.
  
7. Who wrote the play "The Importance of Being Earnest"?  
A. Oscar Wilde B. Quentin Crisp  
C. Christopher Isherwood D. Warren Piece
  
8. Pat Robertson is in trouble because:  
A. One of his sons has recently come out as bisexual.  
B. His Christian Broadcast Network owes big tax penalties.  
C. The FBI linked one of his followers to the Atlanta bombing.  
D. God doesn't actually hate gays.
  
9. In her heyday camp / vamp idol Mae West was:  
A. 5' tall / 150 lbs B 5' 4" tall/ 135 lbs  
C. 5' 7" tall / 180 lbs D. 5' 9" tall / 150 lbs
  
10. The Mormon Church believes:  
A. Homosexuals are condemned to hell for thinking unclean thoughts.  
B. Homosexuals can be members in good standing

in the church as long as they don't have sex.  
C. People who have lived a "gay lifestyle" in the past are welcome if they convert to heterosexuality.  
D. Homosexuals can be part of the church as long as they have been "married" in a Mormon union ceremony.

## DON'T FORGET TO WRITE!

The goal of Valley Free Press is to help keep the gay and lesbian community aware of news and important events. Copies are distributed free at various locations and will be provided, upon request, to gay, lesbian, transgendered and gay friendly organizations for distribution at meetings and in mailings.

Valley Free Press welcomes the submissions of all writers (subject to editorial review) relating to events or subjects of special interest to the gay and lesbian community. Service organizations are especially encouraged to contact VFP with news and information about upcoming events. Writers with ideas for articles are encouraged to call VFP at 432-5449.

## Distelfink

by Ruby Zebu 4/98 "Diet or DeLarid"



1.C, 2.A, 3.C, 4.B, 5.C, 6.D, 7.A, 8.B & D, 9.A, 10.B.